



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



THE "DRYAD" FRIEZE

(By permission of Essex & Co.)

SOME NEW ENGLISH WALL PAPERS

IN a lecture on the Lesser Arts of Life, delivered in support of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, William Morris gave some sound advice. 'Whatever you have in your rooms,' he said, 'think first of the walls; for they are that which makes your house and home; and if you don't make some sacrifice in their favour, you will find your chambers have a kind of makeshift, lodging-house look about them, however rich and handsome your movables may be.' And if we follow this simple advice, it is but a short step further to think first of the best way of decorating our walls. On the whole, paper has stood the tests that have been brought against it sufficiently well to deserve its present general acceptance as the most practical material. It is easily hung, it is low in price compared with tapestry, can be frequently changed, and admits of a very wide range of decorative treatment. Those who have turned their attention to the improvement of colour and design in paper-staining deserve our thanks, and the work of Messrs. Essex & Co. in this direction cannot pass without recognition. It is a firm of comparatively recent growth, having been founded by Mr. R. W. Essex in 1887, and at the outset was intended only to be the means of distributing good design printed by other firms. With the assistance of such men as C. F. A. Voysey, T. R. Spence,

Geo. C. Haité, Lindsay P. Butterfield and Albert J. Baker, these new designs so made their mark upon other paper-stainers that at last the firm was compelled to undertake the printing of its own papers. Every original design moreover calls for the characteristic colouring of a characteristic line, and it is necessary to read into healthy, vigorous work bold and suitable colour. The lesser arts of life when once their claims had been fairly recognised required a proper setting. Furniture had become more healthy and suitable, even the carpets and the window hangings had received attention, and the wall papers had to follow suit or render all other efforts at reform only partially successful. Where flowers were used, it was necessary that flowers and not the traditional French cut turnips should be the decorative motif. The design had to be simplified, just as the sweet simplicity of good cabinet work had in the healthy, vigorous reaction to supersede the falseness and insincerity of Louis XV. and Louis XVI. styles. The Englishman was at last ill content to live in an upholsterer's showroom. The drawing room, in which few Englishmen ever feel really at home, might remain falsely French; but the rooms for living in required a more healthy and homely treatment. Old English furniture became a necessity, and with this necessity came a desire for a new manner of wall decoration. Henry

SOME NEW ENGLISH WALL-PAPERS



*THE "BEAULIEU" DESIGN
AND "THESPIAN" FRIEZE*

(By permission of Essex & Co.)

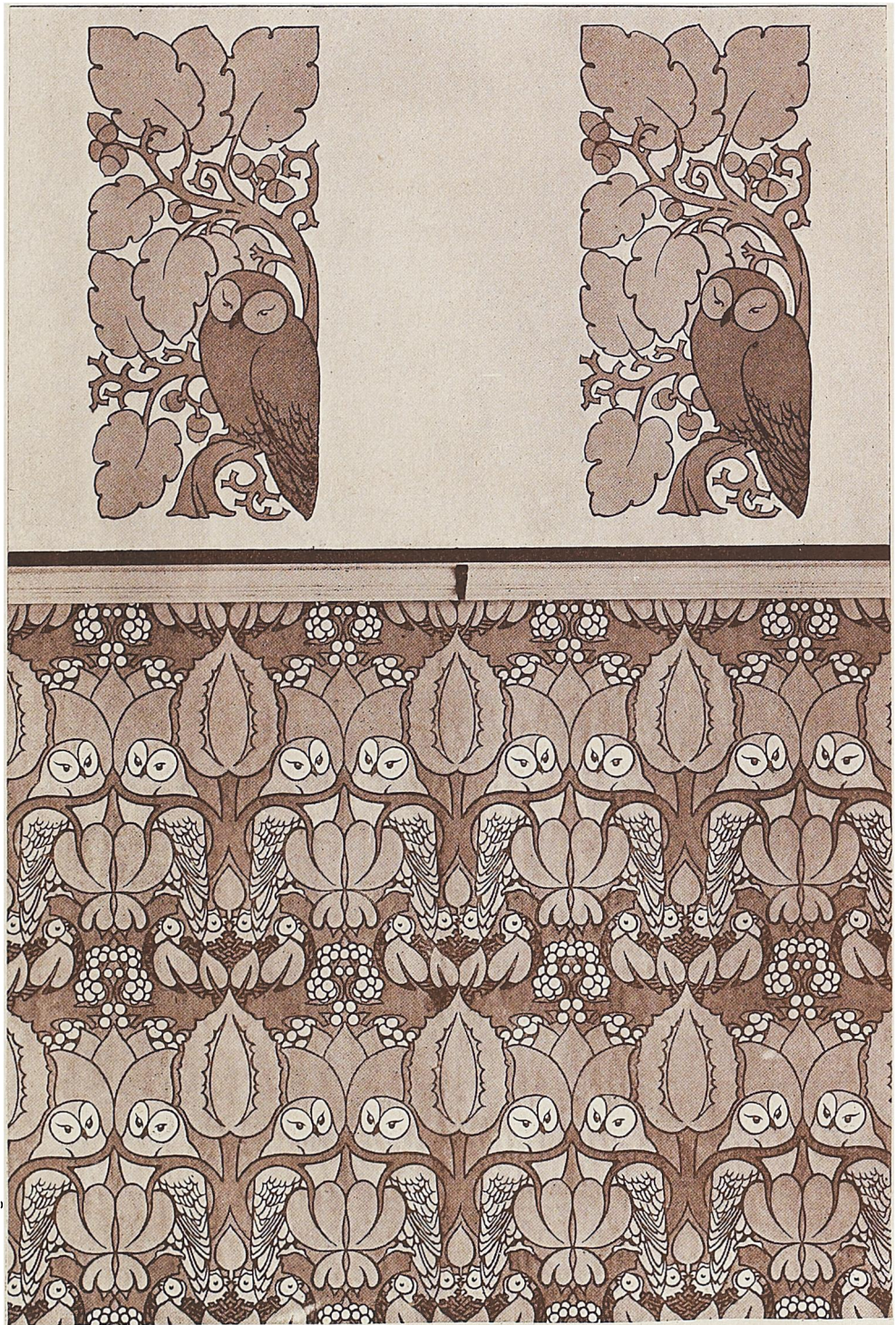
SOME NEW ENGLISH WALL-PAPERS



THE "KATINKA" DESIGN
AND "FLORA" FRIEZE

(By permission of Essex & Co.)

SOME NEW ENGLISH WALL-PAPERS



*THE "OWL" DESIGN
AND FRIEZE*

(By permission of Essex & Co.)

SOME NEW ENGLISH WALL-PAPERS



THE "IONA" DESIGN
AND "HEMLOCK" FRIEZE

(By permission of Essex & Co.)

SOME NEW ENGLISH WALL-PAPERS



*THE "LYRE BIRD" DESIGN
AND FRIEZE*

(By permission of Essex & Co.)

SOME NEW ENGLISH WALL-PAPERS



*THE "TIGRIS" DESIGN
AND "ROSALIE" FRIEZE*

(By permission of Essex & Co.)

SOME NEW ENGLISH WALL-PAPERS



THE "COLUMBA" DESIGN
AND "WELBECK" FRIEZE

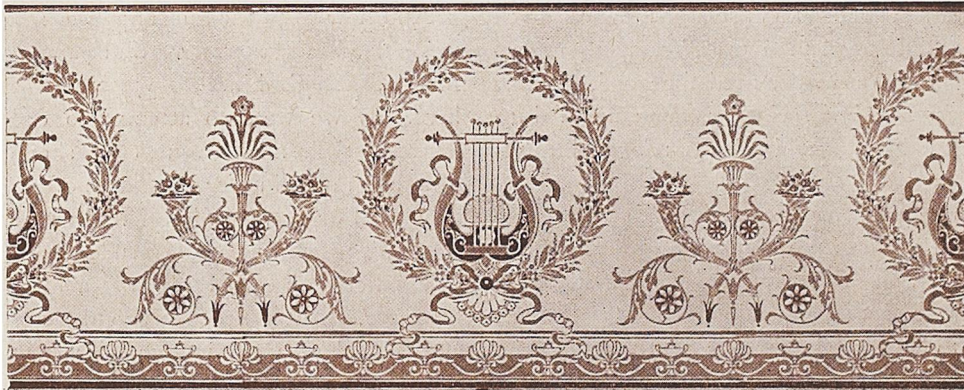
(By permission of Essex & Co.)

SOME NEW ENGLISH WALL-PAPERS



THE "MONTREL" FRIEZE

(By permission of Essex & Co.)



THE "JEROME" FRIEZE

(By permission of Essex & Co.)



THE "WYKEHAM" FRIEZE

(By permission of Essex & Co.)

SOME NEW ENGLISH WALL-PAPERS

made an early effort to do this, but made the undoubted blunder of having his English coloured designs printed in France. Little by little, the home thrusts of William Morris began to be felt, until at last men like Walter Crane and Voysey rose on the crest of the wave and our wall decoration was brought into line. At first new designs were accepted as good because they were unusual, just as hedge-carpentry too often passed muster for cabinet work because it was some sort of a protest against foreign insincerity. By degrees public taste became improved and the wall paper came to be chosen as carefully as the carpet or the Sheraton sideboard. The period of 'hand-painted' saucers and splashbacks was lived through, and at last 'the trade' came to understand that there was a need for good, suitable wall papers. Block printing came again into favour, and 'the machine' was relegated to its proper place.

Machine printing was, and is, no doubt best suited to the cheap multiplication of designs, and well-printed machine work is always better than immature and crude handwork. It is better, indeed, to have good machine printing than the conventional, lifeless hand decoration by Messrs. Brown, Jones & Robinson, of New Tottenham Street. The well-printed block paper moreover came into favour as part of the healthy protest against cheapness as such. 'Go and see Staples' lovely 4½d. paper,' became less and less the cry of the decorative adviser to the readers of the ladies' papers, because the public came to know that a 4½d. paper might be very passable but could never be lovely. A safer rule to give as a guide for the non-expert is that you cannot get a good thing at an insufficient price. The superior durability of block printing caused the best designs to be sometimes reserved for treatment by this slower and more expensive process,

and the result was a general levelling up, until at the present time there is nothing quite so vulgar offered to the public as used to be the case, even ten years ago. The repeated outcries of William Morris took effect, and the standard of work so improved that we found ourselves, not without some measure of surprise, no longer the despised of artistic nations. This could never have been except for the practical assistance of such firms as Essex & Co., whose work has penetrated all the world over and helped to solidify our proud position as leaders of European taste in the lesser arts of life, and the only nation with a living and modern art idea.

And now as to those examples of some of the newest and most attractive wall papers which by Messrs. Essex's kindness we are able to show here. If we were to attempt to discover the secret of their attractiveness we should perhaps find much of it in a certain sense of companionship. The early Victorian horrors, bad in drawing, poor in idea, and crude in colour, were in conflict with everything that made for cheerful peace. But when you go direct to nature and you take from her some of her own moods and bring them to be round you and with you, you have done much to recover some first principles of natural existence and to compensate for the worry of conventional life.

This perhaps is what these wall papers do for us, but they only do it because they are designed by men who are truly artists. Such a man will not fidget over petty details, but will, even on wall paper, give you broad impressions. The quaint humour of the owl, the pride of the lyre-bird, the grace of the hemlock, these tell their own story direct; and it is because the artist has conveyed the spirit of these that he is able to give us, even in the homeliest room, a sense of friendliness in the very walls.



THE BOVIC" FRIEZE

(By permission of Essex & Co.)